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EDUCATION WEEK

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10th Anniversary

Educators Remain Split Over Cabinet-Level Agency

By Julie A. Miller

WASHINGTON—When the U.S. Department of Education opened its doors on May 4, 1980, advocates of adding the agency to the Cabinet hoped the move would bring greater visibility and status to education issues, both within the government and in the eyes of the nation.

Opponents, on the other hand, predicted the growth of an expensive, wasteful bureaucracy, inappropriate meddling by federal officials in local matters, and increased power for educational interest groups, particularly the National Education Association, which had been the primary proponent of creating the agency.

Ten years later, opinion remains divided on the effect and desirability of Cabinet status for education.

Observers agree that education has risen in importance as both a national and a federal issue, but they differ in their assessments of the department's contribution to that phenomenon.

And they agree that assessing the department's impact is complicated by the fact that it was controlled for virtually the entire decade by an Administration that took office promising

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AP/Wide World

Secretary Shirley M. Hufstedler unveiled a sign during a ceremony to mark the creation of the Department of Education.

'Wall Chart' Data Show Passivity, Secretary Warns

Compilation Criticized As Misleading, Outdated

By Robert Rothman

WASHINGTON—Student achievement in the United States has "reached a plateau" after four straight years of little or no improvement, Secretary of Education Lauro F. Cavazos said in releasing the annual state education-performance chart last week.

The seventh annual "wall chart" indicates that, despite some gains by minorities, overall student performance on standardized college-admission tests has shown no improvement over the past four years, and high-school graduation rates have remained stable since 1987.

This stagnation has occurred, Mr. Cavazos said, despite record levels of spending on education by districts, states, and the federal government.

See chart on pages 28-30.

"The latest wall chart makes it clear that as a nation we are still not seriously committed to improving education for all Americans," Mr. Cavazos told a press conference here. "Often I see indifference, complacency, and passivity, despite the need for immediate and radical school reform."

Referring to the national education goals

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High Court To Rule On When Districts End 'Dual' Status

By William Snider

WASHINGTON—Thirty-five years after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that school districts have "an affirmative duty" to dismantle dual systems for white and black students, the Court is now being asked to decide, in four separate cases, how to determine when that duty has been met.

The number of pending cases in this area rose four last week, when lawyers for districts in Denver and Topeka, Kan., filed papers seeking the High Court's review of lower-court decisions finding they had not yet fulfilled their obligation to desegregate.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The Justices have already announced that they will review a similar decision in the Oklahoma City, Okla., school-desegregation case, but have yet to decide whether they will grant a petition for review filed

Continued on Page 36

Graduates of Other Fields Emerge As Force in Teacher-Training Ranks

By Debra Viadero

In the 1970's, when Sarah Nobis was first thinking about a career, teaching school was not on her list of options.

"My mother is a teacher," says the 26-year-old former government worker, "and she made it clear to me that the reason she was a teacher was that, at that time, there were very few things a woman could do."

Ms. Nobis opted for a degree in economics and went on to become an investigator in the U.S. General Accounting Office, where she explored such weighty matters as whether the federal Clean Air Act was achieving its purpose and how the Navy could save money in its aircraft-carrier program.

But despite the challenging issues, something was missing. "The more I was away from working with people in day-to-day situations," Ms. Nobis says, "the more I wanted to be in some sort of leadership position working with others."

Now, she has come back to the family tradition.

She enrolled in a teacher-training program at the University of Maryland, and by this time next year, she expects to be a fully certified elementary-school teacher—just like her mother.

Once an oddity in education schools, students like Sarah Nobis are becoming increasingly common. Overall enrollments have been growing steadily since the mid-1980's, according to studies, but the most dramatic increases have occurred among a new pool of "nontraditional" students—those who have already earned a baccalau-

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Texas Judge Grants 1-Month Extension For a Funding Plan

By Michael Newman

A Texas judge last week ensured that the state's schools would remain open through the end of the school year by giving the legislature another month to devise a school-funding formula.

But State District Judge Scott McCown also said he would appoint an independent "master" to develop an alternate plan and that he would consider adopting it if lawmakers miss the new deadline.

The judge issued his ruling on May 1, the due-date set by the Texas Supreme Court last fall for enactment of a finance-reform plan that would narrow the wide disparities in spending between rich and poor districts in the state.

By extending the deadline to June 1, the judge recognized that the legislature "is working in good faith to resolve this critical issue of education reform," Gov. William P. Clements Jr. said in a statement.

Judge McCown, who delivered his opinion orally, also said that there would be no further extensions.

Lawmakers had given final approval to a

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Also in the news

7 **Teaching's 'Technophobia'**
Most computer-literate teachers had to get their knowledge on their own, a study shows.

26 **Savings and Loan Fallout**
School group seeks protections against tax losses stemming from the federal bailout.

Parents as Partners:

Helping Families Build A Foundation for Learning

Gary Bohn

The early-childhood years are of critical importance in laying the foundation for later success in school and life.

Today, however, the kind of help and advice once easily available from extended families and neighbors in close-knit communities is in short supply. Many parents do not know where to turn or who to talk to about their fears and concerns related to child development and parenting.

Parent-education programs offer one alternative by giving families a place to go where they can gain information and confidence.

"None of us is really prepared for all the demands of parenthood," one early-childhood expert has concluded. "We all have something to learn."

A special report on parent education, the second in an *Education Week* series on family involvement in schooling, begins on page 13.

IN SUMMARY

AIDS Education Lacking
Two reports released by the U.S. General Accounting Office last week assert that there has been limited progress in providing high-quality AIDS education to adolescents. **Page 5.**

'Junk Food' Back on the Menu
Increased labor costs and a sharp drop in federal subsidies for school lunches led the Los Angeles school board last week to reverse a 10-year-old ban on the sale of "junk food" in school cafeterias. **Page 5.**

Missing More Than the Bus
Higher mass-transit fares for students in Philadelphia seem to be leading to decreased attendance at some high schools, several principals in the district warned last week. **Page 12.**

Property-Tax Revolt?
In a striking demonstration of public anger over the burden of property taxes, New Jersey voters have rejected almost half of all local efforts to raise taxes for the schools. **Page 22.**

A Ban on Paddling
States that do not forbid the paddling of disabled children would be barred from receiving federal special-education funds under a bill approved by a House subcommittee last week. **Page 26.**

Advice to the President
President Bush's education advisory committee last week urged him to consult with educators before deciding how to measure progress toward the national education goals. **Page 33.**

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An Education Week guide to the annual convention of the International Reading Association in Atlanta, Ga.
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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

Alcohol, Marijuana Use Down Among Teenagers, C.D.C. Reports

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reports only partial success in meeting the national goals for 1990 for reducing drug, alcohol, and cigarette use among teenagers.

The C.D.C. said two of its goals for 1990—that the percentage of teenagers who say they abstain from alcohol or other drugs should not fall below 1977 levels, and that the percentage of teenagers who report frequent use of marijuana and other drugs should not exceed 1977 levels—have not been entirely met.

According to the C.D.C., the percentage of teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 who say they shun alcohol and marijuana has increased since 1977, from 68.8 percent to 74.8 percent for alcohol, and from 83.4 percent to 93.6 percent for marijuana. But the percentage of cocaine abstainers decreased, the agency said, from 99.2 percent in 1977 to 98.9 percent last year.

Frequent use of marijuana and other drugs has also decreased among teenagers in that age group, the C.D.C. said.

Teenagers were also more aware of the risks posed by the frequent use of tobacco, alcohol, cocaine, and marijuana, but were less aware of the risks posed by barbituates, the agency reported.

The agency based its findings on data supplied by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

STATES

State Panel Calls for Dismissal Of N.J. School Boards Official

A New Jersey investigative panel has called for the dismissal of the head of the New Jersey School Boards Association following a two-year probe of alleged misuse of funds at the taxpayer-financed organization.

In a report released last month, the State Commission on Investigation charged that the association's director, Octavius T. Reid Jr., improperly took thousands of dollars from his organization to finance an extravagant lifestyle that included trips to Paris and the Virgin Islands, expensive bottles of wine and champagne at dinner, and the use of a car.

Meanwhile, the report alleged, Mr. Reid so mismanaged the organization's insurance pool that it lost more than $1 million at one point.

"We think the officers of the association weren't minding the store," said Thomas Cannon, executive assistant to the independent panel that conducted the investigation. The report has been forwarded to the state attorney general for investigation of possible criminal wrongdoing.

Mr. Reid has been placed on paid leave from his $92,000-a-year job. Association officials were scheduled to study the case more closely late last week.

■ **The Utah Education Association has hired an accounting firm to audit the accounts controlled by its past president, James Campbell, who resigned last month.**

"There are problems with the immediate past president's account," read a statement released by the state teachers' union. "The audit is now in progress. Any differences between U.E.A. and the immediate past president will be submitted to arbitration."

A spokesman for the union refused to comment further.

Mr. Campbell, who resigned April 9 citing health reasons, led the 16,000-member union during a one-day walkout last fall and a threatened strike during the legislative session this year.

Beth Beck, the union's vice president, has succeeded Mr. Campbell and will serve until the term expires July 14. At that time, a newly elected president will take office.

■ **Maryland's superintendent of schools has proposed a far-ranging package of school reforms, but no price tag has been put on its implementation.**

At a meeting with the state board on April 25, State Superintendent of Schools Joseph L. Shilling outlined a package that calls for extending the school year by 20 days, requiring all students to remain in school until they graduate from high school or reach the age of 18, offering evening and weekend classes to accommodate working students, doubling the number of computers in Maryland schools, making kindergarten mandatory, and improving the teaching force.

If approved by the legislature, the reforms would result in one of the most comprehensive revisions ever undertaken in Maryland's public-school system, Mr. Shilling said.

The plan's cost has not yet been determined, according to Larry Chamblin, a spokesman for the state department of education. "The superintendent and the board's strategy will be to first set up a plan of what needs to be done and then take up the question of financing," Mr. Chamblin said.

Board members, he added, will begin to examine the proposals in greater detail at their meeting this month.

■ **North Dakota public schools may not charge parents for kindergarten classes, according to an opinion issued by the state's attorney general last month.**

In January, following voters' rejection of a tax increase for schools, the Williston school district imposed a $25-a-month kindergarten fee. In his opinion to the state department of public instruction, Nicholas Spaeth ruled that the fee is unconstitutional.

As a result, the district will stop collecting the fee and will return all the money collected. Officials estimate the loss at about $37,000 this year and $50,000 next year.

Mr. Spaeth also ruled that districts may not charge a fee for credits beyond the 17 required for high-school graduation or institute a charge for a course that must be retaken by a student who failed it the first time.

School Deals With Tragedy

AP/Wide World

Residents of Sheridan, Ark., last week were coping with the suicides of three Sheridan High School students in two days. Police said two 17-year-olds and a 19-year-old shot themselves. Another 17-year-old in the community of 3,000 killed himself in March, authorities said. Above, Lisa Deal, student council president, and Superintendent David Robinson talk to reporters. Counselors were on call to work with students.

DISTRICTS

New York City Disclosure Policy Invalid, State Court Rules

New York State's highest court last week struck down a New York City board of education policy requiring financial reporting and other mandatory disclosures from certain school employees because the policy had not been negotiated through collective bargaining.

Several unions filed the challenge to the board's policy, which was adopted in 1984 in the wake of a corruption scandal that forced Schools Chancellor Anthony Alvarado from his post.

The policy, which was not allowed to take effect pending the outcome of the challenge, would have required several thousand of the board's top administrators to submit detailed annual financial statements.

Some officials would also have been required to undergo an in-depth background investigation that included consent to verification of credit and tax information, disclosure of former employers' records, health information, disclosure of certain political-party associations, consent to be finger-printed, and an agreement to hold the city harmless for all damages arising

out of the investigation.

A lower court had upheld the policy, ruling that it should not be subject to collective bargaining because it was necessary to fulfill "the strong public interest in detecting and deterring corruption."

But the Court of Appeals last week reversed that decision, saying that, while "reasonable people might well disagree about what measures were appropriate to further the goal of eliminating corruption, we cannot discern a public policy that requires that employees, prospectively, be denied any voice in the matter."

■ **Joseph A. Fernandez, chancellor of the New York City public school system, announced last week he would end a mandatory citywide policy of holding back 4th- and 7th-grade students whose achievement is lagging behind that of their peers.**

Mr. Fernandez told the board of education that the mandatory "promotional gates" policy has been causing students to drop out. Individual schools will still have the option of holding back students, however.

In place of the 10-year-old policy, Mr. Fernandez proposed offering 3rd-grade students who do not meet the standards for promotion a chance to improve through summer school and after-school help during 4th grade.

Participants in the new program would not be held back. But children who refused to participate could be forced to repeat the 3rd grade, Mr. Fernandez said.

The schools chancellor described the aim of the program as helping students upgrade their performance, rather than stigmatizing them.

■ **Prince George's County, Md., police were posted at Oxon Hill High School last week after several parents refused to send their children to school because of a series of attacks on Filipino students.**

Filipino students and parents have described at least two dozen cases, two in the past few weeks, in which students were beaten at the school. They said that the beatings have been occurring for two years, but that fear and cultural norms prevented them from reporting the incidents earlier.

School officials and parents agreed last week to form a task force to address cultural issues at the school, whose enrollment is 11 percent Asian, 72 percent black, and 16 percent white.

■ **An intermediate school in Cleveland will be closed for the rest of the school year so officials can correct conditions that are thought to have caused more than 100 students and teachers to become ill in March.**

An outside consultant hired by the district concluded that a combination of poor ventilation, overheating, and chemicals in the sewer drains of Margaret Spellacy Intermediate School probably caused the students and teachers to become ill on March 7 and 8.

But a physician who examined some of the students at a local hospital has told the district he believes that hysteria, rather than exposure to chemicals, caused the students and teachers to feel sick.

■ **An Arkansas teacher who won a sex-discrimination suit against her district must also be awarded damages**, a federal appeals court has ruled.

In the fall of 1988, a federal district court in Arkansas ruled that the Watson Chapel School District had discriminated against Leydel Willis in denying her several administrative posts. But the district judge ruled it was "impossible" to calculate damages because of the district's complicated pay schedule.

Lawyers for the district appealed the finding of sex discrimination in that decision. The teacher's lawyer appealed the judge's decision not to award damages.

This month, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit decided in favor of Ms. Willis. In remanding the case to the lower court, the judges upheld the finding of discrimination and ordered the district court to award appropriate damages.

School officials are considering an appeal to the full circuit court or to the U.S. Supreme Court, according to the district's lawyer.

■ **An 18-year-old high-school senior killed himself last week when he rode his motorcycle at high speed into the wall of his Fairfax, Va., high school.**

Police said Jerry Edward Minnick parked his motorcycle at the end of the track at Hayfield Secondary School, took off his helmet, and then drove about one-quarter of a mile into the wall of the boys' locker room. Police found a suicide note with the helmet.

Mr. Minnick reportedly was upset over personal problems, had quarreled with his adoptive parents, and was living in a foster home at the time. He was the father of a 5-month-old son by a former girlfriend.

Psychologists and social workers were at the school within 30 minutes, said Dolores Bohen, a school-district spokesman, and were forming counseling groups. The counselors would remain at the school as long as needed, she said.

UPDATE

■ **The Florida Supreme Court has ruled that so-called lease-purchase agreements for school construction are permissible because they do not meet the constitutional definition of a bond issue.**

Under such an agreement, a school district arranges for a nonprofit company or association to sell bonds for new construction or capital improvements. The nonprofit entity then builds the school and leases it back to the district, which eventually gains ownership. *(See Education Week, April 11, 1990.)*

Lawyers for the state had argued that the agreements are illegal because the state constitution requires that voters approve local bond issues when they are to be repaid through a pledge of property-tax revenues.

The high court ruled 5 to 2, however, that the lease deals are not equivalent to issuing bonds. The majority held that under such agreements, no one has authority to force the district to use property taxes to repay the bonds.

The ruling clears the way for hundreds of millions of dollars in school construction in overcrowded districts throughout the state.

■ **The St. Paul Board of Education is proceeding with plans to open several magnet schools in a former warehouse, but three programs that drew parent protests will not be among them.** *(See Education Week, Feb. 21, 1990.)*

The board last month agreed to place three magnet schools, a family-education service center, and a preschool special-education program in the building when it opens next fall.

Following protests from parents, the board decided not to place three other programs—the Adams Montessori Magnet School, the experimental Saturn School, and a proposed magnet school for Native American students—in the former Control Data Corporation warehouse.

DIMENSIONS

What Teachers Earn

Teacher salaries during the 1989-90 school year rose an average of 5.9 percent over the previous year, with the average salary nationwide now topping $30,000 for the first time, according to data compiled by the National Education Association.

According to the N.E.A. data, the average teacher salary this school year is $31,304. Average salaries ranged from $21,300 in South Dakota to $43,153 in Alaska, a difference of $21,853.

The "dollar gap" between the highest and lowest average salary has grown from $15,360 in 1979-80, the association said.

The teachers' union reports that the average salary has increased some $22,678 in current dollars since the 1969-70 school year. When adjusted for inflation, however, the increase over that period is only $1,521, or 8.3 percent, the N.E.A. said.

The data are contained in the current issue of *N.E.A. Today*, the union's newspaper, and will be published later this month in a report, "Estimates of School Statistics, 1989-90."

Average Salaries of Teachers by State

1. Alaska	$43,153	26. Vermont	$28,798
2. Connecticut	40,496	27. Kansas	28,671
3. California	38,996	28. Florida	28,525
4. New York	38,800	29. Wyoming	28,184
5. Washington, D.C.	36,450	30. Georgia	27,892
6. Maryland	36,092	31. North Carolina	27,814
7. Rhode Island	36,057	32. Texas	27,502
8. New Jersey	36,030	33. Missouri	27,229
9. Michigan	36,010	34. South Carolina	27,076
10. Massachusetts	34,225	35. Tennessee	27,052
11. Delaware	33,480	36. Maine	26,881
12. Illinois	33,014	37. Iowa	26,747
13. Pennsylvania	32,809	38. Kentucky	26,275
14. Wisconsin	32,320	39. Alabama	25,500
15. Minnesota	32,190	40. New Mexico	25,120
16. Hawaii	32,047	41. Montana	25,081
17. Ohio	31,170	42. Nebraska	24,751
18. Virginia	30,926	43. Mississippi	24,363
19. Colorado	30,700	44. Utah	23,652
20. Nevada	30,587	45. Idaho	23,494
21. Oregon	30,563	46. Oklahoma	23,070
22. Indiana	30,493	47. North Dakota	23,016
23. Washington	30,475	48. Louisiana	22,993
24. Arizona	29,600	49. West Virginia	22,842
25. New Hampshire	28,939	50. Arkansas	22,009
		51. South Dakota	21,300

PEOPLE

■ **John Ellis**, the superintendent of schools in Austin, Tex., was nominated last week by Gov. James J. Florio of New Jersey to become the state's next commissioner of education.

The 60-year-old Mr. Ellis has headed the Austin school system since 1980. Previously he was superintendent in Columbus, Ohio, for six years and spent three years as executive deputy commissioner for educational programs in the U.S. Education Department.

The National Education Association has cited Mr. Ellis as a "national leader" for his role in integrating the Austin schools in the early 1980's.

Mr. Ellis would replace Saul Cooperman, who resigned when he learned that Mr. Florio planned to launch a national search for a new education commissioner.

Mr. Ellis's nomination must be approved by the state Senate.

■ **James R. Moss**, superintendent of public instruction in Utah, has announced that he will resign June 30 to head a private business-education partnership.

Throughout his three-year term, Mr. Moss has often been at odds with the nine-member state board of education. Three members of the board have sought his ouster because of what some observers have described as an abrasive management style.

Mr. Moss said in an interview that his "deteriorating position with the state board" influenced the timing of his decision to resign.

On July 1, he will become executive director of the Utah Partnership for Education and Economic Development, which, he said, will work to foster collaboration between precollegiate education, higher education, and the state's business community.

Scott Bean, associate superintendent for administration, has been named interim superintendent, pending the outcome of a national search for a permanent replacement.

■ Bart Simpson, the wisecracking 10-year-old star of television's hit cartoon series "The Simpsons," has been expelled from Lutz Elementary Schoool in Ballsville Township, Ohio.

Bill Krumnow, the school's principal, has asked students to stop wearing the popular T-shirts featuring the spikey-haired Bart (an anagram for "brat"), especially one that proclaims "Under-achiever and proud of it, man."

Bart Simpson

"To be proud of being an incompetent is a contradiction of what we stand for," Mr. Krumnow said.

A spokesman for the series told a Toledo newspaper that Mr. Krumnow is not the first principal to give Bart the boot.

New York City Schools Take 1st Steps Toward Management at the School Site

By Ann Bradley

New York City schools interested in participating in the district's venture into school-based management took their first step late last week by submitting letters indicating their desire to take part in the voluntary program.

Under guidelines for school-based management and shared decision-making released March 26 by Chancellor Joseph A. Fernandez, schools were required to get the approval of a majority of their faculty members, parents, and administrators to be considered for the initiative.

In their "letters of commitment," which were due May 4, the schools were asked to show that they had established a school-based management team with a teacher majority. They were also required to describe the "educational intent" of the proposals they will now develop.

Schools whose proposals are approved by Mr. Fernandez will be notified by June 25. Members of the management teams will then spend the summer preparing for the plans' implementation in the fall.

The teams—which were expected to have 10 to 12 members—must include the school principal, the teachers'-union representative, and a parent representative. High-school students are also eligible to serve.

Sandra Feldman, president of the United Federation of Teachers, said school-based management has generated a "tremendous amount of interest in the schools."

"They've been chafing at the bit to try to exercise more authority and do what they think is right, as opposed to being dictated to from on high," Ms. Feldman said. "They feel under the yoke in this system, so there's a tremendous feeling of excitement that they'll be freed up."

The development of a school-based-management program for the New York City schools means that the nation's four largest school districts will all be operating under some form of decentralized management, although the scope of the plans in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Dade County, Fla., differs markedly.

Principals' Authority

In order for a New York school to begin planning for school-based management, 75 percent of its non-supervisory faculty members were required to vote in favor of participating.

> *Schools have "been chafing at the bit to try to exercise more authority and do what they think is right."*
>
> —Sandra Feldman

Ms. Feldman estimated that about 200 of the city's 1,100 schools will be selected to begin school-based management.

For its part, the New York City supervisors' union, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, has advised its members not to sign off on school-based-management proposals unless their school teams agree that the principal will have final decisionmaking authority.

Each school's proposal must explain how team members will make decisions.

The C.S.A. has drafted language that it suggests should be used, which reads: "The committee will strive to make decisions by consensus (ALL members in agreement). In the event that consensus cannot be reached, the principal will have the authority to make the final decision."

Donald Singer, president of the C.S.A., said he believes that "99 percent of the time, everyone's going to agree."

The statement, he said, will prevent teams from becoming "bogged down."

"We're trying to be 'proactive,'" Mr. Singer added, "although there are those who would disagree who say we're being obstructionists."

Planning Money

Schools that embark on site-based management will be eligible to seek waivers from district policy and the teachers'-union contract.

Ms. Feldman said both she and Mr. Fernandez have stressed that schools in which teachers and administrators have a "rocky" relationship are not ready for shared decisionmaking.

Schools whose proposals for school-based management are accepted will receive $7,500 for planning purposes, plus $7 per student, for a maximum of $20,000.

The money can be used for a variety of purposes, including paying team members for extra time spent developing their program, hiring consultants, attending professional conferences, or other professional-development activities.

In his January budget request, Mr. Fernandez asked for $7.8 million over three years for school-based professional development to support the new management initiative, said Bob Terte, a spokesman for the district. The district's budget has not yet been set, he added.

Mr. Fernandez indicated in his budget request that he expected 100 schools to implement shared decisionmaking and school-based management this year.

AIDS Education in Public Schools

	Estimated school districts %
School districts requiring HIV education	66
School districts not requiring HIV education	27
School districts with grades 7-12 requiring HIV education at every grade level	5
School districts requiring HIV education in health courses	79
School districts with HIV teachers obtaining inservice training	88
HIV teachers receiving inservice training	83
School districts reporting the number of HIV teachers trained is:	
More than enough	9
About what is needed	64
Less than is needed	25
School districts reporting:	
They want to do more HIV inservice training	54
The amount of inservice already received is about right	43

Source: General Accounting Office

AIDS-Education Programs Fall Short, Auditor Reports

By Ellen Flax

Two new reports by the U.S. General Accounting Office assert that there has been limited progress in providing high-quality AIDS education to adolescents.

The reports, released last week, conclude that AIDS-education programs in public schools require more teacher training and evaluation and that the federal government is failing to provide AIDS education for out-of-school youths, who may be at high risk for contracting the disease.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control, which oversees most of the federal AIDS-education effort (and which was the main target of the reports), will spend $45 million this year on prevention programs. The President's budget earmarks $52 million for such efforts in fiscal year 1991, $24 million less than the C.D.C. had requested.

The first report, which examined AIDS-education efforts in public-school districts, concludes that "C.D.C.-led nationwide education efforts are not yet commensurate with the epidemic's potential for disaster."

The report is based on the results of a telephone survey of 232 randomly selected school districts and the 13 local districts directly funded by the C.D.C. because they have high AIDS caseloads.

The study found that two-thirds of the public-school districts surveyed provided AIDS education. Only 5 percent of these districts, however, offered AIDS-education at every grade level, as recommended by the C.D.C.

The report suggests that students may not be receiving information about AIDS when they are most likely to be sexually active. Students in the districts surveyed, it says, were about five times more likely to receive AIDS education in the 7th grade than in 11th or 12th grade.

Most of the districts that did not offer AIDS education had fewer than 450 students, according to the report. These districts often cited conservative community values and insufficient school time as reasons for not teaching the subject.

'Inadequate' Data Collection

The report also contends that teachers have not received adequate instruction about AIDS and the human immunodeficiency virus that causes it.

Seventeen percent of the teachers who were responsible for AIDS instruction had received no training, according to the report. Most teachers in districts that required AIDS education had received inservice training on how to teach about AIDS, but this training was not as extensive as districts would have liked and was far less comprehensive than what the C.D.C. recommends.

The report argues that the data collected by state and local education agencies on students' sexual knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors is inadequate.

Only 8 of the 70 education agencies that had received grants from the C.D.C. collected adequate information, it says. Without adequate information, the report adds, it will be difficult for educators to determine if their AIDS-education programs are successful.

> G.A.O. says little is known on 'what's working and how.'

In the second report, the G.A.O. concluded that the "C.D.C. has accomplished little in providing H.I.V. education to out-of-school youth."

Such efforts are critical, the report argues, because the 9 million youths between the ages of 14 and 21 who are not in school are thought to be at especially high risk of being exposed to the AIDS virus.

The report concludes that a plan by the C.D.C. branch responsible for AIDS education to fund local health departments and community organizations to provide outreach to these youths would duplicate an existing C.D.C. program. It recommends that the two programs be merged.

The reports were compiled at the request of the Senate Government Affairs Committee, which held a hearing on the findings last week. At the hearing, G.A.O. officials said the reports suggest that not much is known about the effectiveness of AIDS-education programs.

"We don't have a good handle on what's working and how," said Mark V. Nadel, the associate director for national and public-health issues at the G.A.O.

C.D.C. officials underscored the need for more education. They said the results of new a national study of patients admitted to 26 hospitals nationwide found that 1 in 1,000 adolescents tested positive for H.I.V.

Los Angeles Schools Overturn Ban on 'Junk Food'

By Ellen Flax

Increased labor costs and a sharp drop in federal support for school-meal programs led the board of the Los Angeles Unified School District last week to overturn its 10-year-old ban on selling "junk food" in school cafeterias.

The unanimous decision was prompted by a projected $13.7-million deficit in the district's cafeteria fund this year and the prospect of laying off or reducing the working hours of more than 100 cafeteria workers, district officials said.

A reduction in the amount and value of commodities donated by the federal government for school meals contributed to about half of the deficit, officials said.

Under the revised policy, secondary schools will be allowed to sell low-fat, low-salt potato chips and tortilla chips as à la carte items for lunch in the cafeteria. The new policy also permits elementary schools to offer ice cream, certain kinds of cookies, and fruit bars as à la carte lunch items. Such items are now offered in secondary schools.

Since 1980, the district has banned the sale of junk food and soft drinks in school cafeterias. But, since the early 1980's, student stores in the schools have sold these items as a way of paying for student activities.

Stephen Garcia, the district's food-services director, said the revised policy is expected to raise an estimated $1.46 million annually.

A proposal to allow the sale of soft drinks in school cafeterias, which the board will consider later this month, could raise an additional $2.5 million annually, Mr. Garcia said.

In 1985, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which administers the school-lunch program, issued a rule that allowed participating schools to sell junk food during the school day. The department amended its regulations in the wake of a 1983 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia that found that the U.S.D.A. had exceeded its authority in 1980 by banning junk-food sales until the last lunch period of the day. The legal action had been brought by the National Soft Drink Association. *(See Education Week, June 5, 1985.)*

At its meeting on April 30, the board also voted to increase the price of school meals by 10 cents for elementary-school students and by 25 cents for high-school students.

'Not a New Concept'

These increases will not affect the approximately 80 percent of district students whose family incomes qualify them for free- or reduced-price meals. The district serves about 600,000 school breakfasts and lunches each day.

Roberta Weintraub, the school board's president and the sponsor of the 1980 ban, said she backed the policy reversal in order to save jobs for cafeteria workers. She said that the ban was not very effective, because students were still able to purchase junk-food items at the student stores.

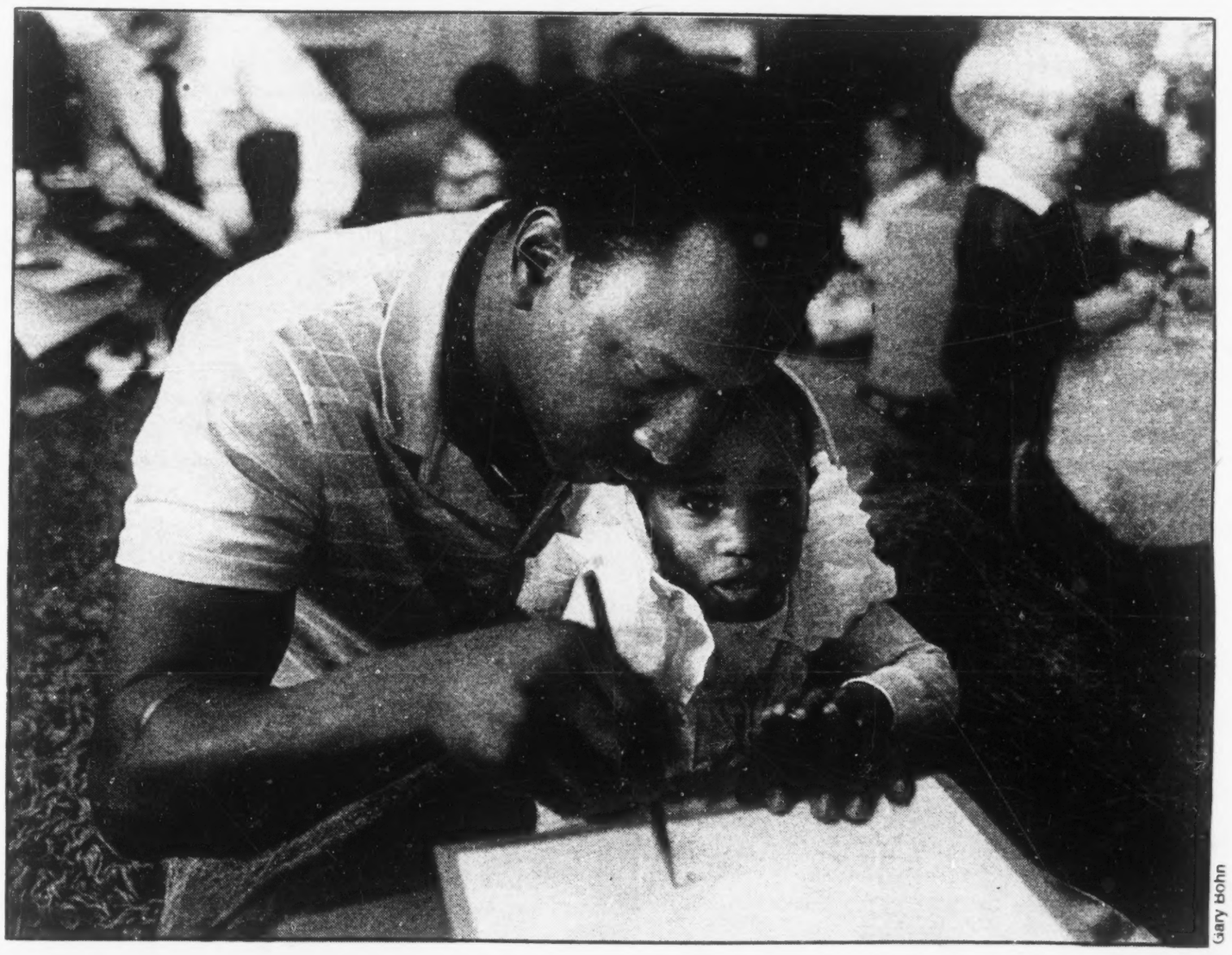
"It's a little hypocritical to say that your student stores can sell it and you can't," she said.

Eileen Gale Kugler, a spokesman for Public Voice for Food and Health Policy, a Washington-based advocacy group, said that most school districts allow students to purchase junk food.

"Making money off of kids' poor nutrition is not a new concept," she said. "It's sad that we are returning to it."

PARENTS as Partners

Helping Families Build a Foundation for Learning



Gary Bohn

Second in a Series of Special Reports

By Deborah L. Cohen

Moments after the birth of her first child 23 years ago, Aurelia Zoretich had a terrifying realization: Nothing had prepared her for the daunting responsibility of nurturing a new life.

A nurse, sensing her panic, slipped a piece of paper into her hand bearing the words, "La Leche League," the name of an international organization that offers women support and guidance on breastfeeding.

"Call this number when you get home," the nurse whispered.

"It was like the underground," recalls Ms. Zoretich, the coordinator of a comprehensive parenting and child-development program in Canton, Ohio—inspired in part, she says, by her own unsettling experience.

Like many new parents, she recalls, "I was terrified to death for lack of information—simply for lack of knowing the right questions to ask."

Helping parents formulate those questions, experts agree, is one of the keys to raising a child who is not only physically and emotionally healthy, but also equipped to become a successful learner.

Traditionally, new parents have turned to family members and neighbors for help and advice in raising their children. Today, however, such networks of support have become unraveled.

For the typical parent, "you have the child, you bring the child home, you may or may not read some of the literature," says Robert A. Patterson, assistant superintendent of administration for the East Providence, R.I., school district, the first in that state to launch a parenting program. "There's really no training for this."

To bridge the gap, public and private organizations have launched parent-education programs and opened family-resource centers to bring such training out of the "underground" and into classrooms and homes from a child's earliest days.

Increasingly, policymakers and educators recognize that parents need a broad store of resources and knowledge to stimulate their child's development and to foster an appetite for learning critical to school success.

At the same time, an increasing research base on child development and the popularization of parenting issues in the media have fueled the demand for more formalized sources of support and information on how to negotiate the complexities of parenthood.

Some of the programs serve targeted populations—teenage parents, parents of children with special needs, or low-income families, for instance; others operate under the premise that all parents, no matter what their circumstances or backgrounds, want to do their jobs better and sometimes need guidance.

Parent-education programs, "in an informal way, are building on something we've all known for a long time—that the most important source of

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